4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV 1
Durd AV3

men using the upper path could reach Nomal. There were ominous mutterings of a coming storm brewing in Hunza and Nagar, and it was imperative that I should be able to move troops to Nomal and reinforce the garrison at a moment's notice. The road was therefore taken in hand in November 1890, and in a couple of months we had driven a good six-foot road through the bad piece. It was not a pleasant road to ride over when it was finished, for there were sheer drops of two and three hundred feet into the river below, but it sufficed. The last hundred yards of the worst bit of cliff nearly broke our hearts. The hillside was formed of alternate layers of sand and loose water-worn stones, and, cut back as we would, we could not get to firm ground. Four times our carefully-built supporting walls went with a run. The men were in despair, even my ever-cheery Major Gokul began to despond. Then, at the men's request, we sacrificed a goat, and made offerings to the god whose business it was, erected a little cairn with a duly consecrated flag, rebuilt our walls with layers of brushwood between the stones, and our road stood. I could now sleep in peace so far as Nomal was concerned, and I turned my attention to the bad cliffs between Gilgit and Bunji, and to the road further back.

D 487
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The labour question was an incessant difficulty. The people of the country were very bad at road-making, and, moreover, had already plenty of work, and I had not enough tools to employ, or money to pay, large numbers. The men of the Kashmir Imperial Service Troops could not be taken away from their drills, musketry, and hut-building. They

D 464
K 702

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1
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had come up the autumn before made up into regiments it is true, but they had received no instruction in the use of their arms, and were useless from the military point of view when they arrived. Willing as they were, they had to be licked into shape, and taught everything from the beginning. It was out of the question to use them for road-making. I had therefore nothing but my company of sappers, and for ten months they worked on the roads practically every day, except on Sundays. It was hard on the men, for road work is very severe, but it was absolutely necessary, and I did my best by giving them extra food and pay to make it easy for them. The result was excellent; before the passes opened we had made the road to Nomal, opened a mule road between Gilgit and Bunji, a distance of thirty miles, and run a track practicable for laden animals up most of the six thousand feet of the dreadful Hattu Pir Mountain, besides improving some bridges on the road to Astor. Luckily much of the thirty miles between Gilgit and Bunji was open ground, but there were many miles of bad going, and to open a mule track through this was a triumph for my men, vile as I must admit the road was to the uninitiated. All this work kept me pretty busy, and I was in the saddle almost every day, riding backwards and forwards to inspect the work.

With the spring of 1891 from all directions came renewed rumours of trouble. The Indus valley tribes, and indeed most of my neighbours, habitually spent the winter, when there was no agricultural work to do, in discussing the advantages and disadvantages of resuming their raids on Kashmir